

The Playboy of the Netherworld

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She goes with her light feet, still as the
sparrow
Over the air, or through the grass its
shade.

All the stranger is the contrast which
combines with
this perfect music such a grimness of ideas;
until his verse
recalls that tragic conception of the Greek—
the Gorgon
Medusa, 'the beautiful horror', the lovely
lips twisted
with eternal pain:

I have seen the mottled tigress
Sport with her cubs as tenderly and gay
As Lady Venus with her kitten Cupids.

So, too, the Muse of Beddoes, dagger and
poison-cup in
hand, goes gliding on her way with the fight
feet and
swaying grace of Herrick's loves in their wild
civility:

The snake that loves the twilight is come out,
Beautiful, still, and deadly.

But now some lamp
awakes,
And with the venom of a
basilisk's wink
Burns the dark winds.

O that the twenty coming years were over!
Then should I be at rest, where ruined arches
Shut out the troublesome, unghosdy day,
And idlers might be sitting on my tomb,
Telling how I did die.

You're young and must be merry in the
world,
Have friends to envy, lovers to betray you,
And feed young children with the blood of
your heart,
Till they have sucked up strength enough to
break it

1 will go search about for Comfort,
Him that enrobed in mouldering
cerements sits
At the grey tombstone's head,
beneath the yew;
Men call him Death, but Comfort is
his name.

The poison is given with a caress: the dagger
tickles before
it plunges home. It is interesting to

compare the rhythm